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LAKE COUNTY JOINS THE SAFETY AND JUSTICE CHALLENGE TO CREATE A FAIRER, MORE EFFECTIVE LOCAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND MODEL REFORMS FOR THE NATION

Lake County is one of 20 Counties and Cities to Receive Grants to Design, Test Innovative Criminal Justice Reforms

[Lake County, IL] February 1, 2016 – The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation today announced that Lake County is one of 20 additional jurisdictions joining the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#), a national \$100 million initiative to reduce over-incarceration by changing the way America thinks about and uses jails. Lake County and the other jurisdictions will design and test innovative local justice reforms designed to safely drive down jail usage and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in their local justice systems.

Lake County was chosen following a highly competitive selection process that drew applications from across the country.

“Local jurisdictions are leading the way on justice reform,” said MacArthur President Julia Stasch. “Demand for reform at the local level is considerable and growing, as evidenced by the number, diversity, and creativity of the applications we received. This momentum is encouraging, particularly as the federal justice reform landscape evolves and shifts.”

Through the Challenge’s [Innovation Fund](#), Lake County will receive support and expert technical assistance in designing and implementing local reforms. Lake County’s innovations will focus on intensive case management to 30 high utilizers of the Lake County Jail. This intensive case management will be used to motivate the high users upon reentry to the community. Upon release, they will be provided a “warm handoff” of individualized coordinated multi-agency existing services, based on the person’s needs, with the goal of diverting the group of high utilizers from rearrest and reincarceration.

Sheriff Mark Curran said, “By providing intensive case management and diverting high utilizers of the jail from rearrest and reincarceration, we will see a reduction in taxpayer money to house jail inmates. This will certainly have a positive impact on the high population of jail inmates. We are grateful for this grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and I am excited for the anticipated positive outcome.”

Undersheriff Ray Rose said, “This process is another demonstration of how we are changing the way we do business at the Lake County Jail. The data shows us many who are in mental crisis end up in jail instead of being provided proper resources and community programs. With this grant, we are designing a method to get high jail utilizers and those with mental illness the proper healthcare they need and into the appropriate community-based programs. We are working to reduce



recidivism, reduce incarceration, thereby reducing jail housing costs. This is a great opportunity and will undoubtedly benefit the Lake County community.”

Lake County Board Chairman Aaron Lawlor said, “The mental health crisis that is sweeping our county and our country permeates every family, neighborhood, workplace, and school. Our jails have become de facto mental health hospitals and so many others end up homeless or cycle needlessly through our emergency rooms. It is not humane or cost effective. This funding is an important step in tackling mental health challenges in our criminal justice system.”

Lake County and the other Innovation Fund jurisdictions will receive short-term support of \$50,000 each, are eligible for future funding opportunities, and have access to the resources, peer learning opportunities, and expertise of the [Safety and Justice Challenge Network](#). The Urban Institute, which is managing the Innovation Fund in partnership with the Foundation, will provide expert technical assistance to the jurisdictions as they implement their plans. Key learnings and resources emerging from the Innovation Fund will be shared with and beyond the justice reform field.

As in most jurisdictions, Lake County is aware the jail is too frequently used as a means for housing those with mental illness and those who are in need of other community services. To address this issue in the local justice system, Lake County will work with a community service provider to provide high-intensity case management of the selected group of inmates. The short-term goal is to foster health literacy and the long-term goal is diversion from rearrest and reincarceration.

Lake County will continue to place an emphasis on community engagement and collaboration among local law enforcement, corrections officials, prosecutors, defenders, judges, and other stakeholders in this work to test, innovate, and drive reform.

The Innovation Fund jurisdictions expand the Challenge’s reach into new states and deepen its work across the country. They include:

- Adams County, CO
- Allegheny County, PA
- City of Atlanta, GA
- Broward County, FL
- Buncombe County, NC
- Campbell County, TN
- Clark County, NV
- Dane County, WI
- State of Delaware
- Deschutes County, OR
- Durham County, NC
- East Baton Rouge Parish, LA
- Lake County, IL
- Minnehaha County, SD
- Missoula County, MT
- Polk County, IA
- City and County of San Francisco, CA
- Santa Clara County, CA
- Summit County, OH
- Yakima County, WA



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Information about the selected jurisdictions, as well as news, research, and events related to the Safety and Justice Challenge, will be published on www.safetyandjusticechallenge.org.

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About the MacArthur Foundation

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation supports creative people, effective institutions, and influential networks building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. MacArthur is placing a few big bets that truly significant progress is possible on some of the world's most pressing social challenges, including over-incarceration, global climate change, nuclear risk, and significantly increasing financial capital for the social sector. In addition to the MacArthur Fellows Program, the Foundation continues its historic commitments to the role of journalism in a responsible and responsive democracy, as well as the strength and vitality of our headquarters city, Chicago. More information about the Foundation's criminal justice reform work can be found at www.macfound.org/criminaljustice.

About the Urban Institute

The nonprofit Urban Institute is dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. For nearly five decades, Urban scholars have conducted research and offered evidence-based solutions that improve lives and strengthen communities across a rapidly urbanizing world. Their objective research helps expand opportunities for all, reduce hardship among the most vulnerable, and strengthen the effectiveness of the public sector.

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